

Cassiodorus returned to Italy. He found a homeland shattered after the final convulsive wars between the Goths and Byzantines. Huge swaths of the countryside lay wasted. The city of Rome was virtually in ruins.

Cassiodorus joined the exodus to the countryside. He turned his

family estate near the Eve of Italy, but
into a combination school & religious
retreat - a scholar's monastery.

In this way Cassiodorus turned his
back on the outside world & withdrew
intellectually & spiritually & physically
to become a spiritualist and converser - he
who converts from a life of evil to one
of living according to Christian principles.
He made a desperate attempt to save
manuscripts of city libraries were
rescued & abandoned.

554

at CASILINUM

Roman infantry and
mounted archers defeated
the Franks, ending
invasion of Italy. Frankish

Ostrogoths were driven from Rome.

Justinian's struggle to recover the West reached its pinnacle. His great abject was the reunification of the Roman empire. It was rewarded with limited success. For most of his reign he fought against SASSANID Persia. The tribute he had to pay the Persian king - CHOSROES I - dissipated his resources. The wars however secured Byzantium's southeastern flank and enabled Justinian to send the most

brilliant of his generals - BELISARIUS. In 533 he recaptured Africa from the Vandals, and that tribe disappeared. In 536 he captured Naples & Rome. In 540 he captured Milan & Ravenna. A stalemate lasted for 14 yrs. Then another general - NARSES - drove the Ostrogoths from Rome and restored imperial authority over all of Italy. For a few years Cordoba was again brought within the Empire.

By end of 6th Cen. everything Justinian had regained was lost to Byzantium forever.

554

Massachusetts a Frank museum

The ceaseless struggle in Italy which had been waged for 20 years had destroyed what might have become a regenerating force, and had left Italy depopulated and desolated; and this ruin was in no wise compensated by the reestablishment of the shadow of an imperial government under an "arch" at Rome.

There was no effective attempt at
rehabilitation.

Incidentally, Justinian sought to
restore the imperial authority in Spain,
where some cities were secured, occupied
and garrisoned with imperial
troops. The 3rd Persian war was
exclusively a struggle to recover COLCHIS,
which the Persians had retained at the
truce. Finally, the peace of 555
restored it, in return for a substantial
indemnity.

554AD

Battle of CASILINUM (Wars of Byzantine Empire)
The Byzantine General NARSES (a eunuch) had
no sooner reconquered Italy for the Empire of
Justinian I than the Franks poured across the Alps. The
outnumbered imperial troops hemmed themselves into towns
while the flood swept down the peninsula. Finally at
Casilinum, 20 mi north of Naples, NARSES deployed 18,000
Byzantine troops to challenge main body of Franks 30,000
strong, under BUCCELIN. The Frankish infantry charged
head on, wielding their deadly, short-hulled axes (the
FRANCISCA). Narses stopped the head of the Frankish
column with Roman infantry and the dismounted
heavy cavalry of the HERULE auxiliaries. He also sent
his mounted archers against both flanks of the invaders.

the entire body of Franks was trapped and cut
to pieces. Bucephalus was killed. Even the fierce
Frankish infantry could not compete against
well-mounted troops.

This battle ended the Frankish invasion.
The remnants pulled back beyond the Alps. From
that time until his recall in 567, the aged eunuch
Narses ably ruled the whole of Italy for his
emperor in Constantinople.